

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 CU-04 INR-10 NSAE-00 AID-05 USIA-06
ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 ABF-01
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-----065227 171146Z /11

R 171057Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6320
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LONDON

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NESCO

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: UNESCO, AORG
SUBJECT: UNESCO: GENEVA GROUP DECIDES ON DEMARCHE TO
M'BOW

REF: A) PARIS 2125 B) STATE 30996 C) PARIS 3416
D) PARIS 1977 14901

1. SUMMARY: GENEVA GROUP LOCAL (GG) MET FEB 15 TO
ARRIVE AT COMMON GG POSITION ON UNESCO BUDGET WHICH CAN
BE PRESENTED TO DG M'BOW, IN HOPES OF INFLUENCING HIS
DECISION ON BUDGET LEVEL FOR BIENNIAL PROGRAM (20 C/5).
AFTER DISCUSSION, POLL SHOWED THAT ALL BUT NETHERLANDS
(9 OUR OF 10 REGULAR MEMBERS) COULD ASSOCIATE THEMSELVES
WITH A DEMARCHE INDICATING 270 MILLION DOLLARS AS A
"MAXIMUM" FIGURE WHICH THE MAJORITY COULD SUPPORT,
ALTHOUGH EXCHANGE FLUCTUATIONS AND CONTENT OF FINAL
PROGRAM AND BUDGET MIGHT FURTHER INFLUENCE SOME MEMBERS
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FINAL DECISIONS. GG DEL, LED BY AMB TORRES, WILL VISIT
DG ON FEB 21 TO PRESENT GG VIEW ON BUDGET LEVEL, AND
ELABORATE ON GG'S CONCERN ABOUT COST EFFECTIVENESS OF
UNESCO'S PROGRAM AND BUDGET. FACT THAT MEMBERS ABLE TO
REACH A CONSENSUS ON AN APPROACH TO DG AFTER MUCH
DISCUSSION IN LOCAL GROUP AND CAPITALS, IS SOURCE OF
SATISFACTION (AND PLEASANT SURPRISE) TO GG MEMBERS. END

SUMMARY.

2. AS PRE-MEETING CONSULTATIONS INDICATED ONLY NETHERLANDS WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO JOIN CONSENSUS ON A BUDGET LEVEL FIGURE, AMB MOURIK (NETHERLANDS) RESTATED HIS GOVT'S POSITION THAT PRESENTING DG WITH AN "ARBITRARY" BUDGET CEILING IS TOO "BLUNT" AN INSTRUMENT FOR GG PURPOSES. RATHER, THE GG SHOULD REVIEW EACH UNESCO PROJECT, AND COMPOSE POSITION ON PROGRAM AND BUDGET BASED ON FINDINGS. GOVTS SHOULD NOT LEAVE QUESTION OF PROGRAM PRIORITIES AND SELECTION SOLELY TO DG'S DISCRETION, BUT SHOULD ASSUME ACTIVE ROLE IN PROGRAM SELECTION AND FORMULATION.

3. SEVERAL GG MEMBERS WHO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN "INDICATIVE TARGET FIGURE" (ITF) EXERCISE SINCE ITS INCEPTION REPLIED TO NETHERLAND'S POSITION. FRG DPTY PERM REP (GRUNDEL) REPEATED CONCLUSION OF PAST SEVERAL GG MEETINGS (REFTEL A), THAT GG HAS FOUND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO AGREE ON PROGRAM SELECTION AND PRIORITIES, AND A COMMON ATTITUDE TOWARD PROGRAM GROWTH RATES. HE CONTINUED THAT ONLY THE DG, ESPECIALLY AT THIS LATE DATE, CAN STREAMLINE UNESCO'S PROGRAM, AND ONLY GUIDANCE GG CAN OFFER HIM FOR UNDERTAKING THIS WORK, IS AN INDICATION OF THE BUDGET LEVEL THAT IT WILLING TO SUPPORT. AMB CARDUCCI (ITALY) BUTTRESSED THIS ARGUMENT, STATING THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GG HAS NO CAPACITY FOR UNDERTAKING IN-DEPTH STUDY WHICH WOULD BE REQUIRED FOR MAKING DECISIONS ON PROGRAM, AND THAT IN ANY CASE, ONLY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD (APART FROM THE GENERAL CONFERENCE) HAS STATUTORY AUTHORITY TO EXERCISE OVERSIGHT ON PROGRAM MATTERS. FURTHERMORE, THE GG IN PREPARING AN INDICATIVE BUDGET LEVEL IS ONLY RESPONDING TO THE DG'S OWN REQUEST FOR A BUDGET FIGURE WHICH THE GG MIGHT SUPPORT. FINALLY, CARDUCCI OBSERVED (AND AMB MOURIK CONCURRED) THAT THE NETHERLANDS OBJECTION DOES NOT NECESSARILY PERTAIN TO THE BUDGET LEVEL FIGURE ITSELF, BUT IS A DISAGREEMENT WITH THE METHODOLOGY EMPLOYED FOR SEEKING TO MAKE UNESCO'S PROGRAM MORE COST EFFECTIVE.

4. A POLL OF DELS WHICH FOLLOWED INDICATED THAT ONLY THE NETHERLANDS COULD NOT JOIN CONSENSUS ON AN "ITF" WHICH WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE DG. SINCE AMB MOURIK'S INSTRUCTIONS PRECLUDED HIM FROM JOINING CONSENSUS, HE ACCEPTED INVITATION TO JOIN GG DELEGATION TO DG IN ORDER TO PRESENT THE NETHERLANDS' VIEW ON BUDGET LEVEL QUESTION. HE WILL ALSO POINT OUT THAT NETHERLANDS FULLY SUPPORTS GG'S EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF SEEKING PROGRAM

EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS IN UNESCO.

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5. SWEDISH DEPTY PERM REP DREW ATTENTION TO FACT THAT WHILE HIS GOVT (AND PROBABLY SWITZERLAND, TOO) SHARED NETHERLANDS NEGATIVE VIEW ON "ITF" APPROACH, BOTH COUNTRIES ARE IN FACT "OBSERVERS" IN THE GG, AND THEREFORE NEED NOT BE INCLUDED IN ASSESSMENT OF DEGREE OF GG SUPPORT FOR BUDGET LEVEL FIGURE. HIS PERSONAL VIEW OF MATTER IS THAT COORDINATED EFFORT BY GG TO AGREE ON PROGRAM PRIORITIES AND CUTS HOWEVER DESIRABLE HAS BEEN FOUND IMPRACTICAL, AND THAT AT THIS POINT "ITF" EXERCISE IS ONLY WORKABLE PROPOSITION LEFT TO GG MEMBERS. (NOTE: SEE REFTEL D FOR ACCOUNT OF INABILITY OF GG WORKING GROUP TO AGREE ON PROGRAM PRIORITIES WHILE ATTEMPTING TO COORDINATE RESPONSES TO UNESCO BUDGET QUESTIONNAIRE.) SWISS PERM REP, CHARLES HUMMEL, REPORTED THAT HE HAS NO INSTRUCTIONS, BUT PERSONALLY DOES NOT FAVOR AN "ITF" APPROACH, AND URGED MEMBERS TO DEAL WITH PROGRAM ON ITS OWN MERITS. HE BELIEVED, NONETHELESS, THAT SWISS GOVT

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WOULD SUPPORT A BUDGET FIGURE WHICH WOULD INCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY FOR REAL PROGRAM GROWTH OF 4 PERCENT.

6. RECORD OF GG CONSENSUS ON AN "ITF" OF 270 MILLION DOLLARS WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE DG AS FOLLOWS: "270 MILLION DOLLARS IS THE MAXIMUM WHICH THE MAJORITY OF MEMBERS OF THE GROUP COULD SUPPORT, THOUGH THEY ARE NOT FULLY AGREED ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF CHANGES IN THE RATE OF EXCHANGE BETWEEN THE DOLLAR AND THE FRANC. SOME MEMBERS OF THE GROUP WOULD SUPPORT A FIXED FIGURE OF 270 MILLION DOLLARS WHEREAS OTHERS MIGHT SUPPORT A DIFFERENT FIGURE IN THE LIGHT OF: A) THE EXCHANGE RATE OPERATIVE AT THE TIME OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE; B) THE CONTENT AND PRESENTATION OF THE PROGRAM AND BUDGET."

7. FORMULATION (ABOVE) HAS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT DIVERSITY OF VIEWS ABOUT WHAT SHOULD BE DONE WITH QUESTION OF EXCHANGE FLUCTUATIONS. MANY DELEGATIONS HAD IMPRECISE INSTRUCTIONS OR NONE AT ALL ON THIS IMPORTANT ITEM. NONETHELESS, IT SEEMED THAT MAJORITY GG MEMBERS LESS CONCERNED WITH 270 MILLION DOLLARS FIGURE AND UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS FOR CALCULATING IT, THAN WITH DESIRE FOR ARRIVING AT A GG "CONSENSUS," OR AT LEAST TO AVOID MAKING CONSENSUS AN IMPOSSIBILITY. BELGIUM, FOR EXAMPLE, PREFERRED NETHERLANDS POSITION, BUT SAID IT WILLING TO GO ALONG WITH A 270 MILLION DOLLAR FIGURE IN THE INTEREST OF GROUP SOLIDARITY. JAPAN ARRIVED AT ITS SUPPORT FOR BUDGET LEVEL FIGURE MUCH THE SAME WAY AS THE US, AND THE UK WAS WILLING TO GO ALONG WITH THE VERBAL PROVISIO THAT FIGURE SHOULD PROVIDE FOR "REASONABLE" REAL PROGRAM GROWTH, AND ALSO ENJOY SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORT OF GG.

TORRES

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